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Restoring Economic Capacity of Populations Affected by the Crisis in Northern Mali (RECAPE)



NEAR EAST FOUNDATION

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Quarterly Report

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Near East Foundation

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[USAID/OFDA-NEF]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	ii
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
II. ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS	1
A. Sub-Sector 1: Fisheries.....	1
Activity 1.2 Restock at least 5 fishponds.....	1
Activity 1.3 Provide fishing equipment and training in fishing	1
B. Sub-Sector 2: Livestock	2
Activity 2.1 Restore community pasture areas	2
Activity 2.2 Distribute Emergency Supplemental Feed.....	2
C. Sub-Sector 3: Improving Agricultural Production/Food Security.....	3
Activity 3.1. Facilitate Market-Based Access to Seeds and Inputs	3
Activity 3.4 Rehabilitate market gardens.....	4
D. Sub-Sector 5: Livelihoods Restoration.....	4
Activity 5.2 Provide cash grants to restart income-generating activities.	4
Activity 5.3 Build capacity for successful livelihoods restoration.	4
III. PROJECT SUCCESES	5
IV CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED DURING THE QUARTER	5
V. OVERVIEW/IMPACT OF SECURITY SITUATION	5
ATTACHMENT 1: PROGRESS ACCORDING TO INDICATORS.....	6
ATTACHMENT 2: FISHER TRAINING	9
ATTACHMENT 3: MARKET GARDEN SEED DISTRIBUTION	10
ATTACHMENT 4: GRANT DISTRIBUTION	11
ATTACHMENT 5: PHOTOS FROM QUARTER.....	12

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Cover Photo: Women receive cash vouchers.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

NEF	Near East Foundation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
RECAPE	Restoring Economic Capacity of Populations Affected by the Crisis in Northern Mali
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the activities carried out during the second quarter of the project (July 1-September 30, 2013). The Near East Foundation continued the implementation of activities according to the work plan. Activities focused on distributing fishing materials and equipment, restocking rehabilitated fish ponds, training fishers on production techniques, distributing seeds for market gardens, rehabilitating market garden structures, distributing cash grants, and monitoring activities. The project met (and in some cases exceeded) targets for the second quarter:

- 19,600 fingerlings were delivered to 5 rehabilitated fishponds.
- 160 fishers (over half women) received and filled vouchers for fishing kits.
- 156 fishers (over half women) participated in trainings to promote improved fishing techniques and the management of fishponds.
- 3,341 women in 12 villages benefited from the free distribution of 3,500 kg of shallot seeds for market gardens.
- 1,707 beneficiaries received cash grants totaling 85.5 million FCFA. Beneficiaries also received support from economic recovery agents in the planning and implementation of economic activities.

Ongoing monitoring and support was provided to project beneficiaries who received agricultural inputs and livestock support during the project's first quarter. While crops were growing well, the lack of rain since the beginning of September has had a detrimental effect on millet and rain-fed rice crops and threatens a grain crisis.

A detailed summary of achievements against targets is included in [Attachment 1](#).

II. ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. Sub-Sector 1: Fisheries

The project supported the fishing sub-sector by restocking rehabilitated fish ponds, distributing fishing materials and equipment, and training fishers in improved fish farming techniques.

Activity 1.2 Restock at least 5 fishponds.

Following the restoration of 5 fishponds completed during the last quarter, RECAPE worked with harvesters to restock these ponds and help them return production to a minimum of pre-crisis levels. The delivery of a new supply of fingerlings in the rehabilitated fish ponds has built the capacity of fishers in the area and will further help the communities recover from the effects of the crisis in Northern Mali.

Suppliers were chosen using a competitive bidding process. The selection was made based on a number of criteria, including: ability to provide the product within the specified time, knowledge of and experience in the field, and bid price. A contract for the provision and delivery of the fingerlings to the five rehabilitated ponds was put in place with the selected supplier.

Fish were delivered to the farmers (3,920 total per site), with a grand total of 19,600 fingerlings delivered to seed the five rehabilitated ponds in the towns of Diaptodji, Korientzé, Noradji, Fanabougou, and Korombana. The species that were both preferred by and delivered to the beneficiary communities are Tilapia Zillii, Claris Gariepinus, and/or Claris Anguillaris. The ratio between Tialpia and Claris species was 3 :1.

Activity 1.3 Provide fishing equipment and training in fishing/fish processing techniques.

The project worked with the cooperative societies that manage the rehabilitated ponds to distribute material and equipment to fishers. 160 fishers (including 82 women) received vouchers

for fishing kits that included: 1 net, 2 traps, 2 containers for fish storage, 2 buckets, and 1 rack for drying and smoking fish.

Fishers also participated in training sessions that focused on re-instilling hope into the fishing sector, and reinforcing techniques for meeting immediate needs without adding stress to weakened fisheries. The fishers learned improved technical and financial management skills for the sustainable and efficient operation of fishponds. 156 people (82 women total; 28 in Diaptodji and 54 in Korombana) participated in the training sessions.

The RECAPE project team assessed participants' knowledge prior to beginning the sessions. The training was held in a participatory fashion to encourage active participation. Training sessions focused on aquaculture and management techniques, the maintenance of structures, fish species and food, the preservation and processing of fish, fishing controls, and financial management. The training also emphasized the roll of the community in the operation and management of the fishponds (See [Attachment 2](#) for more information).

In Diaptodji, participants were particularly interested in producing fingerlings locally to promote production during all seasons.

B. Sub-Sector 2: Livestock

Activity 2.1 Restore community pasture areas

The rehabilitation of 5 pastoral water points, completed during the first quarter, focused on the reconstruction of superstructures (rims, watering basins, drainage, paving) and the repair of collapsed or cracked internal walls. As a result:

- Domestic and transhumant livestock water needs in the targeted areas are now met year round.
- Superstructures allow animals to access water in any season.
- The development of at least two troughs of 3,200 m³ at each water point allows for the storage of enough water for herds. An estimated 16-20 animals may drink simultaneously at these points, as opposed to 3-4 before development.
- In the villages of Lenga (Hairé Commune) and Kerena (Kerena Commune), the livestock are now able to remain in the area and provide milk and manure to residents.
- Three pastoral wells (in Pel, Bodara, and Tèye) that had been abandoned due to deterioration of internal walls were restored. These water points now attract more than 56,000 cattle, sheep and goats in search of pasture land/transhumance paths.
- Cooperative societies in charge of the management and maintenance of rehabilitated water points have improved incomes.

Activity 2.2 Distribute Emergency Supplemental Feed

The distribution of animal feed in nine municipalities of Douentza and Mopti during the project's first quarter was organized in a transparent and participatory manner with the active involvement of government, communities, technical services, local chambers of agriculture, farmers' organizations, cooperatives of economic operators, and local transporters. The distribution of supplemental feed has had important impacts in the targeted area:

- Provided a food supplement for livestock in the area affected by the occupation.
- Increased the availability of food and reduced costs in the market.
- Helped various actors and structures in the livestock meat industry to recover and revitalize their work after more than a year of inactivity.

- Gave 634 women supplementary food for their livestock, without which they would have had to leave their homes and move to locations where the risk of loss, disease, theft, and conflict was increased.
- Helped traders and transporters to restart their activities.

C. Sub-Sector 3: Improving Agricultural Production/Food Security

Activity 3.1. Facilitate Market-Based Access to Seeds and Inputs

During the project's first quarter, significant support was provided through the distribution of inputs (seed grain and fertilizer), agricultural tools, and in the rehabilitation of rice plains. These activities benefitted approximately 4,459 people who were affected by the crisis in 10 communes in the cercles of Douentza and Mopti. This quarter, the project focused on monitoring beneficiaries, providing support in the use of the agricultural inputs and equipment that were distributed, and supporting the development of rehabilitated land (particularly the Mougui rice plain in the commune of Koubewel Koundia). The project team developed a monitoring plan for the three months of the rainy season (July-September) to track farmers' use of implements.

Millet Seed. The project team tracked 1,773 beneficiaries in 5 of the 10 villages (Douentza, Manko, Gouye, Kara, and Intaga) targeted by the project. These villages were selected based on their accessibility during the rainy season. The project team found that 96.25% of the 1,773 producers (who received 35,460kg of millet seed) were using the seeds well. Farmers sowed 3,413 ha of the planned 3,546 ha – approximately 2 ha per producer. The remaining 3.75% of producers lost seeds due to poor storage prior to planting.

Rains began during the second half of July, and were satisfactory until August. Millet crops were normal and promising. However, the rains stopped abruptly, and there has been no rainfall since September 4. This prolonged lack of rainfall has been fatal to the crops, and a grain crisis is possible.

Rice Seeds and Fertilizer. Monitoring of rice seed and fertilizer distribution was conducted in 5 of the 6 beneficiary villages (Korientzé, Bagui, Koundioum, Mougui, and Hororo). The rehabilitation of the Falembougou (30 ha) plain will be completed after the winter season. The inputs provided to 1,321 beneficiaries were used to plant 130 ha, including 80 ha of irrigated rice and 50 ha of rain-fed rice.

Beneficiaries all had prior experience with rice production, and planting and fertilizing were all done using appropriate techniques. In the irrigated perimeters of Korientzé, Bagui and Koundioum (where producers have total water control), the crop is growing well and at the stage of ripening. In contrast, in rain-fed rice fields (where farmers have only partial control over water and are dependent on rains), the one-month drought has severely compromised rice production.

Vegetable Seeds. The project planned the distribution of 250 kg of shallot seeds and 100 kg of potato seeds to each of 14 market garden sites. The project team negotiated and acquired 3,500 kg of shallot seed in September for distribution. Certified potato seed (1,400 kg) will not be available until November.

Distribution of the shallot seeds was organized at the village level, in the presence of local authorities and leaders of the 14 beneficiary women's cooperatives and societies. In total 3,341 women in 12 villages benefited from the free distribution of 3,500 kg of shallot seeds, which will enable them to resume farming their market gardens. More information on the recipients of shallot seeds is available in [Attachment 3](#).

Activity 3.4 Rehabilitate market gardens

The project team identified and selected a local contractor with significant experience for the reconstruction of damaged market garden sites. Rehabilitation will be conducted in 14 sites with a total area of 16 ha. Work will consist of: tracing of land plots; planning and leveling plots; construction of wired fences; repair of vandalized water basins; repair of destroyed water hoses; and the repair of damaged wells.

D. Sub-Sector 5: Livelihoods Restoration

Activity 5.2 Provide cash grants to restart income-generating activities.

Following the selection of cash grant beneficiaries during the last quarter, the project team distributed a total of 85.5 million FCFA in cash grants to 1,707 beneficiaries during this quarter (See [Attachment 4](#) for a breakdown of distribution by commune and by gender). Activities undertaken with grants varied by site, although cattle and sheep fattening activities were predominant. The main activities undertaken in each commune were:

- **Haire:** sheep fattening, grain (millet), seasoning (spices), food (cake, peanuts, dairy products)
- **Douentza:** sheep fattening, condiments (vegetables, spices and other products), food (peanuts, dairy products, beverages made with local products, flat cakes), general trade
- **Djaptodji:** cattle trade, fattening, condiments, food, fish
- **Konna:** selling fresh / smoked fish, cereals, sheep fattening, condiments, general trade
- **Korombana:** fish, cereals, fattening cattle trade, condiments (vegetables, spices and other products)
- **Oroube Dounde:** fish, fattening cattle trade, condiments (vegetables, spices and other products), food (flat cakes, peanut)
- **Tedje:** trade in various items: sugar, tea, cereals, condiments, fattening

The trade of food and fish is mostly done by women. Both men and women undertook animal activities, but men tended to undertake activities on a larger scale.

The distribution of cash grants was done through the antenna offices of Nayral/NEF in each commune. Distribution took at least a month in each commune, as beneficiaries travelled from a number of villages. Selected beneficiaries presented vouchers at the location indicated on their vouchers to be paid individually. Grants were most easily distributed on weekly market days, when beneficiaries travelled to sites. The distribution of grants was conducted in the presence of local authorities, and no problems or incidents were noted.

Activity 5.3 Build capacity for successful livelihoods restoration.

Economic recovery agents provided guidance to grantees in designing (or redesigning) income-generating activities for rapid recovery. Officials organized consulting sessions with beneficiaries in order to help them select activities to be undertaken with funds. Agents directed beneficiaries towards activities that would be more lucrative given the socio-economic context of the area. Distribution of grants began in July, during the month of Ramadan, a major event with a strong impact on the food market. The next two months were also marked by the Tabaski Festival, which provided a number of income generating activities for people in the whole area.

A number of factors affected beneficiaries' activity choices, including the rainy season and the marriage of girls (which generally takes place at the end of the harvest). For some recipients, who had lost all their working capital during the crisis, cash grants provided a quick way to restart a lucrative business and support their economic recovery. For others, the grants strengthened their working capital and increased their financial standing.

After the first three months of cash grant distribution, ongoing project monitoring found:

- An increase in the volume of activities
- Improved living conditions
- Increased working capital
- Increased volume of money has enabled traders to be repaid, allowing them to reconstruct their business activities.
- Financial autonomy of some women
- Families and households able to restart businesses activities from before crisis
- Recovery of loan repayment culture to Nayral/NEF.

III. PROJECT SUCCESSES

In the project's first six months, a number of successes have been noted:

- In Korientzé, Koundioum and Bagui, 3 irrigated perimeters benefiting from inputs (seeds, fertilizers) distributed by the project developed 80 hectares for rice production. From these perimeters, it is estimated that farmers will generate 560 tons of rice paddy.
- The rehabilitation of pastoral wells in Lenga, Kerena, Bodara, and Pel benefited not only the pastoralists in the area, but the general population around these waterpoints. The mayor of Hairé, thankful for this support, said "It is not only our animals who were saved, but also (and especially) our children and women who had suffered from a lack of potable water."
- In Korientzé, Douentza, and Konna, the cash grants distributed to women, men and youth not only sparked a surge of economic dynamism but also an assurance to have financial independence and participate in the reconstruction of local economy.

IV. CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED DURING THE QUARTER

The main difficulty in the quarter was the sudden failure of the rains in September. The lack of rainfall for over 30 days did not allow normal growth of millet and rain-fed rice. An initial assessment by the Regional Agriculture Directorate noted poor harvest in 5 of the 15 Communes in the cercle of Douentza (Diaptodji, Hairé, Korarou, Dallah, and Douentza. In the other 10 Communes, the crop conditions are average and could deteriorate if the water situation does not improve. While millet and rain-fed rice crops are suffering, project monitoring has shown that irrigated rice seeds, fishing and breeding activities are having favorable results this year. The impact of this lack of rain on crops will become more evident at harvest time, and appropriate responses can be considered at this time.

V. OVERVIEW/IMPACT OF SECURITY SITUATION

During the quarter, the project team did not note any challenges in project implementation due to the security situation in Douentza. NEF continues to participate in weekly OCHA humanitarian partner meetings. While the security situation is generally calm, the UN Office of Security continues to recommend that humanitarian actors take precautions given a deteriorating environment in the North (with recent incidents in Gao, Tombouctou, and Kidal over the past weeks) and threats of attacks in Mopti.

ATTACHMENT 1: PROGRESS ACCORDING TO INDICATORS

Sub-sector	Indicators & Targets	Achieved in Quarter	Achieved Overall
Objective 1: To promote increased food production and emergency recovery of capacity in cereal production, fishing, market gardening, and livestock production.			
Fisheries	Number of people trained in fisheries, by sex. (Target: 160; 80 women)	156 fishers (82 women) trained <i>156 fishers, including 82 women, trained in improved production techniques at 5 rehabilitated fishponds; averaging 31 people per pond.</i>	156 fishers (82 women) trained <i>The management committees' members have increased knowledge of responsible planning and implementation activities, and of intensive production techniques for rehabilitated ponds.</i>
	Number of people benefitting from fisheries' activities, by sex. (Target : 1600 ; 900 women)	1,584 people (804 women) <i>The difference in the number of beneficiaries is partly due to trainees leaving training sessions for health reasons, and because of the prolonged absence of a dozen fisher groups that were in the area before the crisis.</i>	1,584 people (804 women) <i>This support has enabled the resumption of production in 5 rebuilt fishponds.</i>
	Average number of kilograms of fish harvested per fisher in six-months, by sex. (Target : 1,000 Kg per fisher)	TBD <i>Project support in the fisheries sector has effectively resumed production at all of the rehabilitated and traditional fishponds, alike. Beneficiary fishers are hopeful about and committed to overcoming the crisis, particularly with good floods coming and pond rehabilitation underway.</i>	TBD <i>The 5 fishponds were re-stocked.</i>
Livestock	Number of animals benefitting from or affected by livestock activities (Target : 100,000)	101,500 <i>43,000 cattle; 57,000 sheep and goats; 1,000 donkeys; 500 camels.</i>	101,500 <i>The distribution of animal feed and the rehabilitation of pastoral water points satisfied at least 60% of the needs of about 101,500 animals during June (both a lean period and during seasonal migration) in the areas covered by the project.</i>
	Number of people benefitting from livestock activities, by sex. (Target 2,428 ; 850 women)	5,218 people (2,334 women) <i>Individuals benefited from the animal feed and pastoral water points activities. Pastoral regeneration will</i>	5,218 people (2,334 women)

		<i>begin after flooding which will start in December.</i>	
Improving Agricultural Production/ Food Security	Projected increase in number of months of food self-sufficiency due to distributed seed systems/agricultural input for beneficiary households. (Target: 6 months)	TBD <i>The estimated production of beneficiary producers will be done after the harvest, in either October or November, according to crop conditions.</i>	TBD
	Number of people benefiting from seed systems/agricultural input activities by sex. (Target: 7,800 direct participants; 3,980 women)	4,459 people (893 women) <i>Vegetable seeds, notably shallots, are being distributed. Certified potato seeds will be available on the market in November.</i> <i>There are 3,341 female producers who benefit from the vegetable seeds.</i>	4,459 people (893 women)
Irrigation	Number of hectares irrigated. (Target: 100)	30 ha <i>The difference in numbers is due to a project postponement due to winter in the plains of Falembougou (30ha) and PIV Koundioum (40ha).</i>	30 ha
	Number of people benefiting from irrigation activities, by sex. (Target: 1,000; 500 women)	438 people (124 women) <i>The sites of Falembougou and Koundioum (totaling 70 ha) will be rehabilitated after the winter season.</i>	438 people (124 women)
	Projected increase in number of months of food self-sufficiency due to distributed seed system/agricultural irrigation equipment activities. (Target: 6 months)	TBD <i>This information will be available after the harvest.</i>	-
Objective 2: To restore viable livelihoods for conflict-affected communities, returnees, and IDPs in support of economic recovery.			
Seed systems and Agricultural Inputs	Number of people assisted through livelihoods restoration activities, by sex. (Target: 1,900 direct participants; 1,400 women)	1707 1,400 women and 307 men received cash grants	1707
	Percent of beneficiaries reporting their livelihoods restored within three to six months after receiving support. (Target: 80%)	TBD <i>Investigations to determine the rate of recovery of activities, thanks to the support of the RECAPE project, are underway.</i>	TBD
	Total USD amount	TBD	TBD

	channeled into the program area through sub-sector activities. (Target: \$197,445)		
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ATTACHMENT 2: FISHER TRAINING

Training/Improved Techniques	Production	Topics Covered
Technical Pond Management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Concept of Pond Pisciculture :</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition and instillation requirements for ponds. ▪ <u>Construction and Operation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dimension - Maintenance - Impoundment - Choice of fingerlings - Density - Feeding (how and when to distribute food) - Harvesting fish (partial fishing and complete emptying) ▪ <u>Processing and Conservation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drying (scaling, eviscerating, fermentation, etc.) - Smoking - Protection against fish-eating insects
Gestion Financière des étangs piscicoles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roles of the members of the Management Committee ▪ Management Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fish stocking - Technical monitoring (fisheries control) - Electrical loads - Record revenues

ATTACHMENT 3: MARKET GARDEN SEED DISTRIBUTION

Communes	Villages	Association or Cooperative Society Benefiting	Quantity of Seeds Received (kg)	
			Shallot	Potato ¹
Dangol boré	Falembougou	Société coopérative « Benkadi-Ton »	250	-
		Société coopérative Agro pastorale des femmes	250	-
	Koressana	Association villageoise des femmes	250	-
	Tibouki	Association villageoise des femmes	250	-
Gandamia	Kikara	Association villageoise des femmes	250	-
Diaptodji	Dari	Association Multifonctionnelle des femmes « Faso Baara »	250	-
	Déri	Société coopérative des femmes « Badenya »	250	-
Koubewel Koundia	Adia Dindari	Association villageoise des femmes maraîchères	250	-
	Koïra bery	Association villageoise des femmes maraîchères	250	-
Korombana	Korientzé	Société coopérative des femmes de Socourani	250	-
		Société coopérative des femmes maraîchères « Ciwara-Ton »	250	-
	Mbessena	Société coopérative des femmes maraîchères « Faso Yiriwa »	250	-
	Tiécouraré	Société coopérative des femmes maraîchères « Cèssiry Ton »	250	-
	NGorodia	Association villageoise Multifonctionnelle des femmes	250	-
Total			3.500	-

¹ Certified potato seeds are available and will be distributed in November 2013.

ATTACHMENT 4: GRANT DISTRIBUTION

Beneficiaries by Commune

Commune	Grant Beneficiaries			Grants Distributed			TOTAL
	Non displaced	Displaced Women	Displaced Men	Non displaced	Displaced Women	Displaced Men	
Haïré	251	69	22	11 550 000	3 450 000	1 100 000	16 100 000
Douentza	314	148	41	17 450 000	7 400 000	2 050 000	26 900 000
Diaptodji	124	67	18	5 380 000	3 350 000	900 000	9 630 000
Konna	143	66	19	9 125 000	3 300 000	950 000	13 375 000
Korombana	154	41	14	7 700 000	2 050 000	700 000	10 450 000
Oouroubé Doundé	157	23	10	5 970 000	1 150 000	500 000	7 620 000
Tédjé	24	1	1	1 325 000	50 000	50 000	1 425 000
Total	1167	415	125	58 500 000	20 750 000	6 250 000	85 500 000

Beneficiaries by Commune and by Gender

Commune	Grant Beneficiaries		Grants Distributed		TOTAL
	WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	MEN	
Haïré	289	53	13 450 000	2 650 000	16 100 000
Douentza	428	75	21 400 000	5 500 000	26 900 000
Diaptodji	177	32	8 030 000	1 600 000	9 630 000
Konna	191	37	9 550 000	3 825 000	13 375 000
Korombana	161	48	8 050 000	2 400 000	10 450 000
Oouroubé Doundé	143	47	5 270 000	2 350 000	7 620 000
Tédjé	11	15	550 000	875 000	1 425 000
Total	1 400	307	66 300 000	19 200 000	85 500 000

ATTACHMENT 5: PHOTOS FROM QUARTER



Distribution of shallot seeds to village women in Mbessena



Women receiving vouchers for vegetable seeds in the village Tiécouraré



Fishers from the villages of Takouti and Sobbo show their vouchers for fishing equipment



Rehabilitated and planted rice plain (30 ha) in Mougui, Commune of Koubewel, Cercle of Douentza.



Distribution of fishing gear in the village of Takouti



Visit to a newly reconstructed well.